



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SORROW AND CONSOLATION.

OH God! what awful depths of woe
Beneath the flowers the happy tread!
What mournful cypress branches grow
Beside the roses joy has bred!

For one who smiles — how many grieve!
For one who laughs — how many weep!
While those on shore securely live,
What ruthless storms the ocean sweep!

And yet, ye storms, ye come and go;
Ye torrents sweep the land and pass:
Oh that it were with sorrow so!
Oh were it thus with tears, alas!

Though *one* the aim — the common tomb —
How different shows each single way!
Ye all who wander that of gloom,
Of grief, and terror, and dismay —

Bear on the load, nor feebly sink,
Nor doubt for all a fitting close:
It is the thirsty who will drink,
The weary who will find repose.

— Mrs. Z. Ragozin.

LOST LILLIAN BRACY;

A TRADITION OF CHARLES II.'S TIME.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSPIRATORS AT BAY.

"SIR RALPH EDGE CUMBE!" spoke Walter Bracy, fiercely, when thus the Fifth-Monarchy Men and their associate stood covered by the deadly tubes of the musketoons, "is it thus that you visit the house of a loyal gentleman at midnight, bringing armed force and breaking down doors with lawless violence? You shall pay well for this — be sure of so much — if there be right in England!"

"It is thus, Walter Bracy," replied the young knight in a tone little more calm than that of the other, so warmed was the blood of the campaigner by this attempted resistance — "thus that we visit the house of a disloyal man, a murderer, and a regicide in foul intent. Nay, scowl not, for denial will but add to guilt! Your plot to murder the king is known and defeated. Your comrades are in safe-keeping. The scaffold waits."

"For us, is this waiting?" asked Whelpley, coolly. "What proof have you of the charge which we deny?"

"For the Lord will not hold guiltless those who trample upon his people, and —" Brintnall found courage to begin, but not space to end, being interrupted by the hoarse voice of Walter Bracy.

"Aye, where is your proof, that I, or any of us here present, is in guilt? This is my house, and in it should be proof of treason, if any such exist, save in the fancy of reprobates. Search it; and if you find in it, or on us, anything to warrant this charge, so be it. If not, look to yourselves, in quittance for this outrage!"

"Ah, the fire has been at work, then!" hazarded the knight. "But here," and he took from his doublet and opened the papers handed him at the coppice by Letty Bryce, "here is the proof of your guilt — the bond of blood, signed with your own names and those of the others whom we have entrapped."

"Sdeath," was the single but pregnant comment of Carver, as he saw the paper unrolled.

"A copy of the bond, by all that is infernal!" muttered Whelpley, as he, too, recognized the form of the fatal scroll. Only the man most deeply implicated met the charge with that promptness which might better have been expected of certain others:

"A base forgery, by the Rood! No hand of mine has signed that paper, as God hears me; and I believe not that any other in this company has so signed it."

"Ah, true — this is but a copy, and yet full enough to bring you to fair trial, methinks; and with due proof of its truth, sufficient to give work to the hangman, if the headsman do not dispute his claim. Dare you deny, men of guilt, that the bond of blood, a copy whereof this is, as you aver, was but yesterday in your holding, and signed with your own proper names?"

"We do so deny," answered Whelpley; while Carver was content with a simple "Humph!" of contempt either for the accusation or the denial; and Walter Bracy added:

"God's blood! — we do challenge and arraign this as a most foul and base lie, in the teeth of any who so assert!"

"Ah, so!" exclaimed Sir Ralph. "Then for our witness, if witness must indeed be had. Men-at-arms, look to it that your prisoners make no escape, and give fire on the instant if they so attempt."

With the words he passed out through the broken doorway; and, save for the presence of the soldiers, the conspirators were for the time alone.

"There is foul treachery here, of a surety; and yet are the dogs on a false track, methinks," said Whelpley, in a low voice, when the knight was beyond hearing.

"The wicked triumph yet a little, but they shall not always prosper!" spoke Brintnall, with the most declared of his upward movements of hand and eye, and the more natural if possibly less pious conclusion, uttered almost as if by one of the wicked: "Curse this whole infernal business!"

"Would that I but knew the traitor, and held him for one instant by the throat!" said the hoarse voice of Walter Bracy.

"Spare your breath, brothers, as I am sparing mine, for early need," half-sneered the indomitable Carver. "We shall need it all, methinks, for long acquaintance with the rope — all but Master Bracy, here, who will lack no wind for a severed gullet! You would choose the dog's death instead of the lion's or the wolf's withal; and you e'en have your wish to liking. For me — let them e'en hang, or chop, or both, an it please them better than some other death of violence!"

At this moment, and giving space for no more of speech, returned Sir Ralph Edgecumbe, by the way that he had gone, accompanied by poor Letty Bryce, the golden head seemingly less tumbled than usual, though in rebellious luxuriance as ever, and her slight figure hurriedly arrayed in a loose chamber-gown, as if hurried from the disarray of her couch, which there was reason to believe that she would at that hour of the night have been pressing, until suddenly aroused by the coming of the armed force and the alarm throughout the Hope. Others of the servants had also been aroused; as close behind followed Stephen Chester, the buxom Nelly Biggin, and a group of servitors male and female, who gathered at the door, but looked with due awe at the soldiery, and with due wonder at events which few of them could by any chance understand.

"Ah, the pretty fool who escaped me!" mused Walter Bracy, as he marked that she entered and none other of possible note. "She! — and what can she possibly know, even if she may have played the spy, at Maude Bracy's order?"

"Letty, girl," said Sir Ralph Edgecumbe, when they were fairly within the apartment and the baby face had ceased looking about with its pretty simplicity rather added to than diminished by the surroundings into which she came. "These papers" — holding up the scroll before exhibited — "do you know them? And what are they? Speak freely, girl; for no one in this presence shall harm you — be sure."

"Ees, measter: they do be copies o' papers that did be in the big chest, 'yond, and that the men I do see did write big black marks on, and handle main often, o' nights — ees!"

"Ha! ha!" burst from Walter Bracy in a fierce exultancy. "Is this your proof? What knows that scullion-wench of 'copies,' or of papers? She can no more write, nor even read, than my gaze-brach! A witness, this — ho! ho!"

There was serious trouble on the young knight's face, as there had good cause to be, under all circumstances, meeting this new thought in the complication. But he went on, with all bravery:

"You saw the papers, then, in the chest yonder, and in the hands of these men?"

"Ees, measter."

"Who made this copy, Letty?" The voice trembling a shade as he asked the important question and repeated the former reassurance: "Speak the truth, my good girl: no one shall do you aught of harm for declaring all."

"Ees, measter, I do speak the truth: I be too poor and common to lie — ees. 'Ee'll say cross words to poor Letty, belike, for a-meddlin' and a-mixin'; but I must tell 'ee: I did make copy o' un papers, myself — ees!"

"You!" was all the exclamation of Sir Ralph Edgecumbe, starting back in surprise not unmixed with more painful thought, as that here must be falsehood, suborned or malicious, in the being that he had loved best of all womankind. And this feeling was not allayed, be sure, by the words of Stephen

Chester, uttered immediately after, as if the stout forester was driven beyond himself with wondering indignation:

"Whoy, Letty, thee be losing thy soul, for sure! Thee knows thee can't write, save the little that Stephen taught thee on the slate; and thee did e'en make the marks o' big A and little B woundy bad, all o' thyself."

Had the face of Ralph Edgecumbe been troubled, but a little before? Now was that face a study of honest good intent in torture, as from his brave heart almost broke out the words of agony:

"Alas! can she be so fair and sweet, and yet so false? God pity me, if so, and send me an early death on stricken field!"

CHAPTER XVI.

NEWS OF LOST LILLIAN BRACY.

WHO has not heard, of late or aforetime, that the darkest hour precedes the dawn — that the sharpest agony foregoes the release from pain, aye, even the moment of bliss — that when all is lost, there yet seems good hope that still may all be won! Sir Ralph Edgecumbe was plunged in misery, more deep and deadly than any that he had ever before known; Walter Bracy was triumphant, as bore evidence his next words, loud, fierce and violent:

"A base lie! An infamous conspiracy to blast the characters of good and loyal men — suborned by whom, let the liar who is in presence tremble to know! Who will believe the story of this ignorant, uncleanly hussy, who can not read or write, and yet copies papers involving life and fortune, — against the word of the master of Bracy's Hope, the heir of as old blood as runs through vein in all England?"

"'Ee doan't believe I, eh? 'Ee doubts Letty Bryce, when she do say what she do have seen — main because she be poor and simple!" broke out the discredited serving-maid, suddenly shaking loose her wealth of golden hair, and throwing off, as one would have deemed, beneath the cloud which it threw around her, the loose chamber-gown which had to that moment eclipsed her. All saw — all started — all for the moment believed themselves laboring under the glamour of enchantment, as that vision of girlish loveliness, up to that time obscured, stood before them in the graceful costume of a gentlewoman of the period, the baby face aglow with womanhood, the soft brown eyes flashing with triumph, and the whole being transformed (to all eyes save those of the lover) by the so sudden change of her fittings and surroundings.

"You defy the word of the poor serving-wench, against the representative of old blood, do you, Walter Bracy?" she spoke, in a clear, ringing, girlish voice, without token of the long restraint to which it had been subjected, and certainly without one trace of the modulation of the poor girl of the kitchen and the laundry. The while lover, enemies and servants stood spell-bound, finding as yet no breath for word, and deeming that they were passing through some radiant dream from which bale or bliss would come in the awakening. "You defy the word of Letty Bryce, do you, man of blood? What have you to urge, then, against the representative of older and purer blood, never yet stained, as the lips of any can say, by deed of cruelty in man or falsehood in woman? Even you have doubted Letty Bryce, natheless but for the moment, as I believe, Sir Ralph Edgecumbe; will you believe and trust Lillian Bracy, in the halls of her fathers, against the villainous and cruel usurper of her lands and her honors, who would have made her by force his leman, on the very day and the very spot where he slew Maude Weatherby, but that heaven was more merciful to his soul than he had grace to be toward himself or any other!"

"Lillian Bracy? It is a lie! Lillian Bracy is dead — she died in childhood!" spoke the man thus confronted, in accents compounded of rage and despair.

"Lillian Bracy might have been dead, methinks, had your good will brought about her end, as you proposed when you sold her to outlawed men, with gold in their hands and evil in their hearts," rejoined the true mistress of Bracy's Hope. "But she lives, as none know better than yourself, false kinsman, now that the masquerade is over."

Walter Bracy spake no more: his head dropped low on his breast, and what the black brows might have told, was haply hidden from the gaze of those who saw him. The three other detected conspirators had each a word, characteristic as each behaved to be — before they were led away, by the men-at-